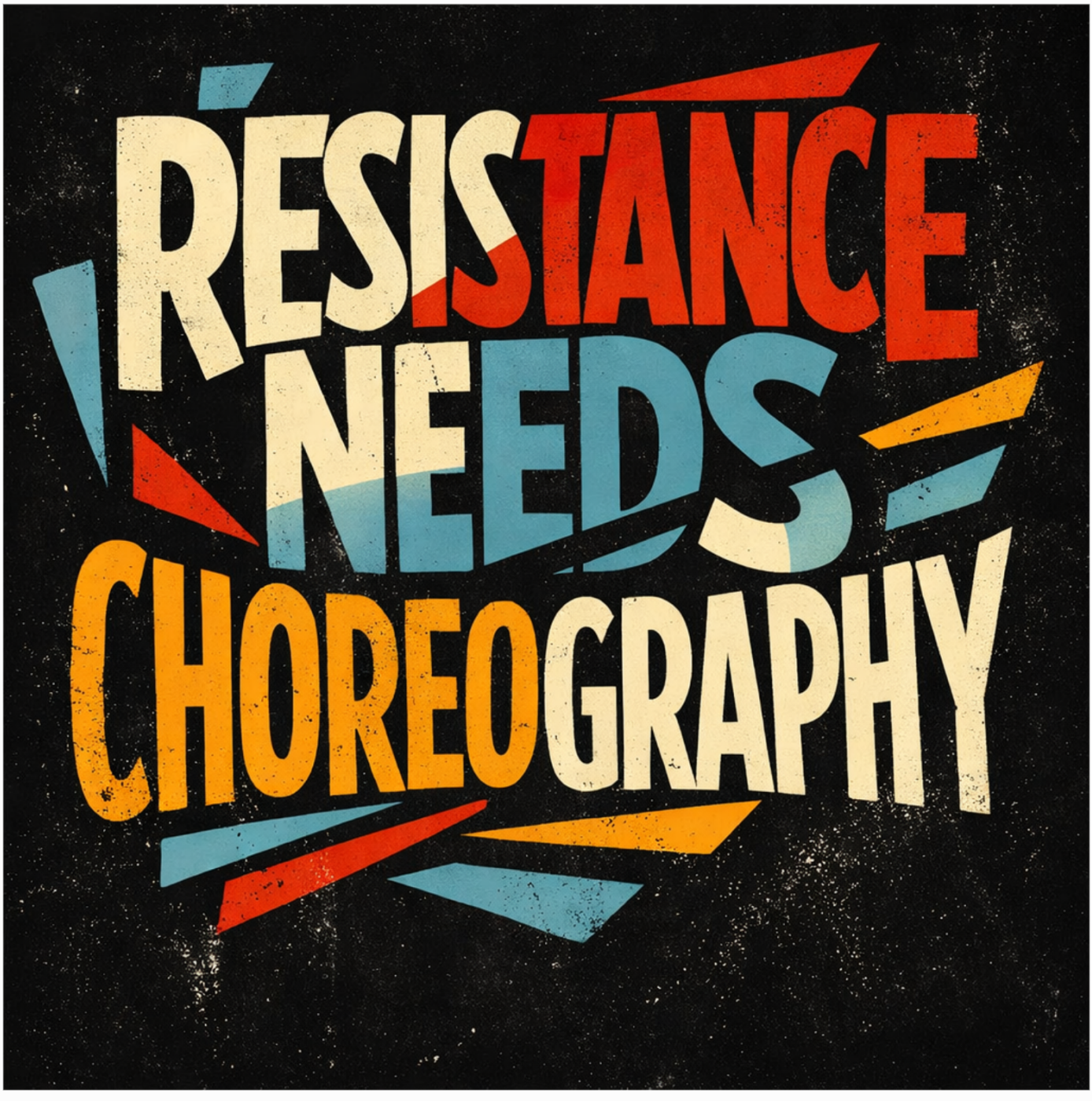

There is a dangerous confusion in contemporary resistance culture: the belief that documentation equals solidarity. A phone is raised, a

video is recorded, a tragedy is archived—and we tell ourselves something has been done.

But a phone is a machine, not a social bond. It records aftermaths; it does not prevent outcomes. Evidence is not protection. Footage is not solidarity. And when power learns that the worst consequence of lethal escalation is a viral clip and a news cycle, domination

quietly becomes policy.

This confusion is lethal when confronting institutions like U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which operate under asymmetrical rules: speed over deliberation, control over dialogue, threat perception over objective reality. In such encounters, individual action —however morally sincere— registers not as resistance but as noise. And noise is

easily suppressed.

The recurring pattern is painfully consistent. A single person intervenes. Another films. Someone shouts. Someone steps forward with good intentions. The scene fractures into improvisation. Authority reads fragmentation as loss of control. The timeline compresses. Lethal force becomes thinkable. Later, officials say the situation was

chaotic. They are not wrong. Chaos is their alibi.

This is not a moral failure. It is an organizational one.

Every durable movement in modern history learned the same hard lesson: isolated courage produces martyrs; coordinated restraint produces leverage. Labor did not gain power through heroic confrontations between individual workers

and bosses. One worker "standing up" is a firing offense. Ten workers acting together is a negotiation. The difference is not righteousness; it is structure.

Resistance to state power obeys the same physics.

When resistance remains individual, power can isolate, reframe, and dominate. Lone actors are legible as anomalies—unpredictable,

emotionally charged, easily neutralized. Institutions are built to handle anomalies. They are not built to handle synchronized behavior that refuses escalation while denying control. That is why lone resistance feels brave but changes nothing, while disciplined collective conduct feels dull but terrifies authority.

This is where contemporary resistance stalls. It privileges

expression over coordination, authenticity over discipline, spontaneity over survival. Phones everywhere, choreography nowhere. The result is a constant reproduction of chaos, which authorities then cite as justification for force. Domination works, and it knows it worked.

A phone, crucially, does not replace solidarity. Solidarity is not symbolic alignment; it is

behavioral alignment. It is people agreeing in advance to constrain themselves for the sake of collective survival. It is refusing the temptation to freelance heroism. It is understanding that the goal is not to win the moral argument in the moment, but to keep bodies alive long enough for politics to matter at all.

This is deeply counterintuitive, especially in

cultures that prize individual expression. It feels wrong to stand still when injustice unfolds. It feels cowardly to suppress impulse. But movements that endure always discover the same uncomfortable truth: self-preservation is not instinctual. It must be learned, rehearsed, normalized. It is a discipline.

Without that discipline, resistance remains trapped in

a loop. Each incident is treated as an exception rather than a pattern. Each death becomes a tragedy rather than a design flaw. Each video fuels outrage, but outrage without coordination only accelerates the cycle. Power adapts. Domination tactics harden. Impunity grows comfortable.

The real scandal is not that authority exploits chaos. That is what authority does. The

scandal is that resistance keeps offering chaos as its primary interface.

If the aim is to resist without feeding domination—if the aim is to deny institutions both bodies and excuses—then the work is unglamorous and slow. It requires shared norms, rehearsed restraint, and collective behavior so boring it cannot be reframed as threat. It requires abandoning the myth of the

lone righteous actor and embracing the power of synchronized survival.

Dead people do not build movements.
Isolated bravery does not scare institutions.
Solidarity does—not as a feeling, but as a practiced form.

Until resistance learns that difference, the footage will keep rolling, and power will

keep calling it order.